

Message Text

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ACTION ITF-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 SR-02 ORM-01 AID-20 IGA-01 VO-03

SCA-01 INSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /078 W
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O R 060456Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9881

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 3175

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, VS, KS

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ON ROK FREIGHTER TWIN DRAGON

REF: STATE 104059

1. POL COUNS MAY 5 INFORMED MOFA ASIAN AFFAIRS BUREAU
DIRECTOR O CHAE-HUI THAT USG COULD NOT ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY
FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ABOARD TWIN DRAGON, CITING
POINTS MADE REFTEL.

2. O SAID HE HOPED THAT THIS DECISION WAS NOT FINAL.
HE ASSERTED THAT VIETNAMESE REFUGEES HAD OBVIOUSLY BEEN
AIMING FOR US TASK FORCE WHEN THEY PUT TO SEA AND THAT
FREIGHTER HAD RESCUED THEM FROM FOUNDERING VESSEL WITH
INTENTION OF TRANSFERRING THEM TO TASK FORCE. HE
SAID THEREFORE ROKG CONTINUED TO HOPE THAT USG WOULD
ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR REFUGEES.

3. KOREAN PRESS MAY 5 AND 6 GIVING HEAVY ATTENTION TO
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TWIN DRAGON PLIGHT, POINTING OUT THAT PROVISIONS LOW

AND EMPHASIZING REFUSAL OF TASK FORCE SHIPS TO TAKE
REFUGEES ABOARD. CHUNGANG ILBO FOR MAY 5 CITES UNNAMED
FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE TO THE EFFECT THAT "THE VIETNAMESE
WAR BEGAN AND ENDED WITH THE US PLAYING THE LEADING ROLE;
KOREA TOOK PART IN THE WAR SIMPLY AS A NATION FRIENDLY
TO THE US. IT IS ONLY FAIR THAT THE US ACCEPT THE
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES."

4. COMMENT: ROKG CLEARLY DOES NOT SHARE VIEW THAT THEY
SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR VIETNAMESE REFUGEES PICKED UP BY
TWIN DRAGON. THIS FACT, TAKEN TOGETHER WITH TRADITIONAL
KOREAN COOLNESS TO ORIENTAL IMMIGRANTS AND STRAINED WELFARE
FACILITIES, INDICATES THAT REFUGEES THEMSELVES WOULD NOT
FIND KOREA CONGENIAL PLACE TO SETTLE. IF POSITION REFTEL
IS FINAL, WOULD APPRECIATE ANY DATA WE COULD PASS ON TO
KOREANS SUGGESTING STEPS THEY MIGHT PURSUE WITH
INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE ORGANIZATIONS AS ALTERNATIVE TO
ACCEPTING REFUGEES IN ROK.
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